

Haunted

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Summary: Shikamaru Nara, Age 22, With a new home, a new job, and a new girlfriend, he finds his life on the verge of exhausting. To top it all off, he can't seem to stop thinking about his ex. ShikaIno, Rated M for language and possible future lemons Disclaimer: I do not own Naruto or it's characters

Haunted

"Shikamaru"

He could feel her breath softly brush against his ear and it made his heart skip a beat, he wanted to smile but he remained his composure. He had been laying on this hill with her for about an hour now. Watching the clouds with her head on his chest, they did this often after long days of training. But what she didn't know, was when she thought he had fallen asleep he was really just relishing in being next to her. She made him feel safe, whole, home. It had been that way their entire lives. He kept his eyes closed, knowing how much it irritated her.

"Shikamaru!" Ino giggled and pushed against his side playfully "I gotta go! wake up." She nibbled on his earlobe only to hear a deep grunt of irritation from the brunette and a strong arm lock around her waist pulling her closer to him.

"nehâ€|no sorry. I like you better here" he let a small smile reach his lips and he opened his brown eyes to look up into her blue ones. Her blonde hair falling to the side of his head and tickling his neck

"Dad is expecting me at the shop in like ten minutes." She smiled down at him, a light blush forming on her cheeks. "nap time is over."

Shikamaru chuckled and nuzzled into her neck, placing a few small kisses there as he felt her breath catch in her throat. He could

still smell the scent of her floral perfume, even after a day's training session. "Fine. Kiss first, then I'll let go." He trailed his slender fingers along the small of her back, earning her prize winning grin and he closed his eyes as he felt her slowly press her soft pink lips against his. His could feel his cheeks getting hot.

"I love you Shikamaru" Shikamaru. Shikamaru?"

He opened his eyes to a familiar blackness. The Grassy hill gone. He touched his face, rubbing at his eyes to focus. He was sweating, burning up. His cheeks were hot from tears. Sitting up, his brown hair fell into his face and he swallowed back the gulp in his throat. He was in a bedroom.

"Shikamaru are you okay?" He looked to his left to see a frizzy haired blonde with concerned eyes and a sleepy demeanor. "it's 4 am."

"Temari" what" sorry" I must have had a bad dream." He ran his hand through his hair and sighed softly "Go back to sleep, I'm alright. I think I need a cigarette."

Shikamaru leaned over to place a soft kiss on his girlfriend's cheek and got out of bed, pulling his hair into a quick sloppy ponytail before he pulled on a pair of shorts and walked out of the bedroom quietly. The small apartment was dark, the city quiet. Shikamaru didn't bother turning on any lights as he moved about, grabbing a pack of smokes and asuma's lighter as he made his way out onto the front porch. Sitting down, the brunette leaned against the wooden railing, feeling the cold wood on his exposed back as he looked out over the dark deserted street in the sand village. "fucking drag" he mumbled, lighting his cigarette and placing it between his lips. That was not the first time his subconscious had betrayed him. He took in a long breath before slowly exhaling, watching the smoke disappear into the night.

Flipping open the lid on asuma's lighter, he quickly closed it again, repeating the motion slowly over and over, trying to clear his mind. Shikamaru hated it in the Sand village" he hated it so much. It was too quiet, too brown. The earth was brown and dry, the people were often covered in dirt and smelled of sweat. The wind was always blowing sand into his eyes" The sky was blue" but there were hardly ever any clouds, and it was so HOT. Even when the sun wasn't out. Shikamaru wiped his brow at the thought. There weren't even any animals. He agreed to move here a couple years ago for Temari, she wanted to be closer to her family, and after Asuma and his father died, Shikamaru didn't particularly want to be in the leaf either. But now, He had to admit that what he longed for more than anything else was the feel of green grass beneath his fingertips, the smell of wildflowers, and the sound of deer hooves in his families' forest.

He didn't blame her, Temari" He knew it was his choice to follow her here. Even if he had been kind of a pushover. Telling her no usually proved to be more troublesome than he wanted to deal with. And he did love her, in his own way. She was a strong woman, reminded him of his mother. She knew what she wanted, and she could be rather sweet when they were alone together. Which was usually enough for him.

Shikamaru sighed and leaned over to put what was left of the cigarette out in the ashtray next to him. The sun had begun to rise. He knew he had to be at his shitty desk job in a few hoursâ€¦ so there was no going back to sleep now. Even if he wanted to, his dreams had not been kind to him lately. Shikamaru walked quietly back into his living room, he turned on the overhead light and walked into his Kitchen to start a pot of coffee. Yes, coffee, he needed coffeeâ€¦ He glanced at the calendar that was hanging on his refrigerator. September 21st. The day before his 23rd birthday, Two days before Ino's.

They had always celebrated together growing up. He felt his heart give a squeeze of sadness. He blamed the date for the recent dreams he was having of his ex-girlfriend. But in his heart he knew the date didn't matter. He thought of her every day, even when he didn't want to. He hadn't seen Ino in five yearsâ€¦ talked to her in about four, but she was still with him, every moment of every day like a fucking poltergeist. He sat down at the dining room table to drink his coffee and he turned on the small Tv, turning the volume down so as not to wake Temari, who was snoring softly in the next room.

Pictures flashed over the screen, He couldn't hear much of what the narrator was saying since the volume was so low, but it was some nature show, documenting forest life. His heart gave another ache as he looked at the white tailed deer grazing peacefully. He took another drink of coffee to try to drown it out, but to no avail, he used to be so good with the deer back home. People sometimes mocked him for itâ€¦

The sun beat down on him as he reached out his arm, extending his slender fingers to touch a blade of coarse green grass. How many minutes had he spent in this spot? On a slightly sloped hill in his families' grove counting the clouds as they floated gently past his field of vision. He couldn't remember, but he didn't really care. Shika closed his narrow brown eyes and ripped a handful of grass up from the earth, twisting the bits into small coils absent mindedly when he felt a familiar warm breath and soft lip trying to open his palm. Chuckling lowly he opened his eyes to see the familiar deer standing above him.

"Sorry Buddy, I'm tearing up your dinner aren't I?" he flattened his palm to let the animal chew on the grass. It wasn't uncommon for the forests deer to be so open with him and the members of his family. The deer that mostly populated these woods had never even been hunted thanks to the nara's after all. It was the most peaceful place in the village, which is why Shikamaru liked it here. It was also why he was so irritated when he heard heavy footsteps crashing through the underbrushâ€¦

"GAGHHH STOP!" He heard a familiar deep voice pant loudly and the deer, now startled, quickly jumped over him and ran in the opposite direction. Kicking dirt in his face in the process.

"UGHhh Choji?!"

Shikamaru stood and brushed himself off as he watched his best friend charge into the clearing. Choji and Shikamaru's fathers had been great friends growing up, so the two had essentially been raised together. Along with-

"God I'm sorry! ITS HER FAULT!" The large round boy pointed behind him at the obviously amused blonde girl who was slowly following him into view, clenching her stomach as she howled with laughter that sometimes made Shikamaru's ears want to bleed.

"Ino, what the hell?" Shika rubbed his temples. The small blonde flashed Shikamaru a smile that made his stomach twist. Her pale face was flushed from the laughter. Ino had always been the mischievous one, Shikamaru wasn't shy about letting her know how much it irritated him, but secretly he found it endearing. Sometimes he was jealous of how easily she found joy in the world around them when he mostly found everything troublesome.

"SHE WAS CHASING ME WITH A SPIDER!" Choji shivered at the word. He had been terrified of them since they were small.

"oh shut it pudge pie, it was just a weed." She teased and tossed what was left of it into the dirt, wiping off her hands on her skirt.

Choji blushed and rubbed the back of his neck nervously "â€|it was a convincing spider"

Shikamaru let out a small chuckle and looked over at the guilty party

"You're awful."

"What are friends for?" She beamed

"Say you're sorry" Shikamaru smirked and sat back down in his favorite spot, crossing his legs. Ino stared at the brunette for a moment, pouting, before she faced Choji.

"I'm Sorry you're so easy to scare" she giggled and walked over to Shikamaru tugging at the strands of hair in his ponytail softly "Don't get too comfortable, we've come to bring you home. We have the chunin exams in a few days and Pinky needs his brain" she poked at his temple.

"hey why am I pinky?" Choji frowned "you're the dumb one" He crossed his arms, clearly displeased.

"What because I'm blonde that makes me dumb! REAL MATURE Choji!" She hissed

"I NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT YOU BEING BLONDE, just DUMB Ino." Choji retorted.

Shikamaru laughed "shut up both of you before you scare away all the wildlife in the village." He flashed his friends a grin "Besides, the answer is no. Asuma has ordered us to rest, we train or study anymore and we will be drained before the exams even start."

"Welp, you heard the man Chubby. Looks like we're on our own. Oh well. If Asuma said no training I GUESS I can find it in myself to relax." Ino giggled and sat down next to Shikamaru, laying back "Guess I'll just get some beauty sleep. Your welcome." She smiled, folding her arms behind her head.

Choji pouted, unamused "What now I have to study by myself and you're not paying for my lunch? Fine. But when we go into the exams and your relying on MY intelligence we'll see who is laughing then. Later Shikamaru, Ino pig." He chuckled, stealing the pet name that Ino's rival called her, and he turned around, leaving the clearing before she could retaliate.

She sat up quickly, a look of sheer irritation on her face as she watched Choji run away before she could respond. Ino looked over at Shikamaru pouting. "you just going to let him talk to me like that?"

"Yup" the brunette chuckled, only to be greeted by a stiff punch to the shoulder by the blonde "ow! God I'm just kidding" he laughed and leaned back once more on the grass.

Ino looked over at her best friend, drinking in his features. She had always loved Shikamaru, he had always been there for her, ever since they were babies, and now that she was growing out of her girlish features she had developed some newer feelings for the brunette "Look at you, your covered in grass. What were you doing anyway?" She teased

Shikamaru gave her a small smirk that made her heart flutter and he brushed some more grass off his lap "I was feeding that deer before you loudmouths scared it away" he pointed toward the tracks the deer left as it had run away.

"Feeding it?" she shook her head and laughed, brushing her bangs behind her ear "I don't believe it. Deer are too skittish"

"Not the ones around here they aren't" as long as you know how to approach them" he smiled

"I still don't believe you" I've never seen a deer that close before" ino bit her bottom lip and shrugged, looking back up at the clouds

Shikamaru gave the blonde his winning smile, one that he didn't use often" come here" I wanna show you something." He stood up and reached his hand out to her "do you trust me?"

Ino blushed softly before she nodded and took his hand letting him pull her onto her feet. "What is it?"

Shikamaru shook his head no playfully "just follow me okay. And be quiet." He looked up at the sun, which had begun to set, he helped his father track the herd through these forests dozens of times, he was pretty sure where he might see something magical. He watched Ino nod in agreement and he took her hand, leading her slowly behind her through the trees, deeper into the underbrush

Ino just watched him, she wasn't a quiet person, but for once she was speechless. The way the setting sun glowed through the leaves in the trees and the way Shikamaru kept glancing playfully back at her, his hand never leaving hers, she felt warm. It was a few minutes they just walked like that, just slowly moving in a beautiful silence until Shikamaru stopped suddenly and pushed her back gently against a tree "Wha?"

"Shh" he whispered pressing his finger against his lip. They were so close that Shikamaru could feel her breath against his shoulder "Look." He smiled encouragingly and pointed just past the tree they were standing behind.

Ino looked over her shoulder at first, before she let go of Shikamaru's hand and turned in place so her back was to him. She placed her hands on the tree in front of her for support as she peeked around it, and what she saw made her lips part in a small gasp, just feet away from her were deer. About a dozen of them. All standing in a small meadow that was filled with thousands of wild flowers. Some of them were laying down in the grass, some were grazing, and some were drinking water from a small stream in the far corner "my god" she breathed and she felt Shikamaru rest his hands on her hips as he watched over her shoulder

"I knowâ€|this is true beauty" he spoke quietly into her ear and Ino closed her eyes for a moment before she looked back out at the meadow. The setting sun shimmered against the stream, and the clearing glowed with a light that she had only seen in her dreams. The wind blew lightly and the flowers and grass rolled around the animals as if they were anchored to the ground. It was the most peaceful thing she had ever seen in her life.

"Do you want to touch one?" He said against her ear. She was so warm under his hands; he knew if he didn't make himself move soon he may never move again.

Ino glanced back at him with a worried look "What if I scare them away again?" her blue eyes met his brown ones and Shikamaru couldn't look away "Just follow my lead." He pointed back at the animals and he wrapped one arm around her waist, pressing his chest against her back as he took her hand in his free hand, walking her very slowly out into the clearing. The deer glanced up at them curiously but didn't move.

Shikamaru lifted Ino's arm, extending it toward the animals and opened her hand flat. "be still." He coaxed and plucked a handful of grass to place in her palm. "just relax" Shikamaru flashed the blonde another knowing smile before turning toward the animals. "tsk tsk tsk...here here." He called out softly and Ino saw the closest deer, a small buck walk toward them slowly until Ino felt it begin to eat out of her hand happily.

"seeâ€|" Shika smiled, his brown eyes bright and Ino let herself grin. Before long the two were surrounded by a few of them, waiting to say hello and get a handful of grass.

"Shikamaruâ€| this is amazing" she turned around to face him and was once again aware of how close they were before one of the bucks nudged her back, wanting another bite, but ended up just pushing her into his arms. Shikamaru looked amused, but he didn't let go of her. He just let himself gaze into her eyes for a moment too long.

"â€|yeahâ€| amazing." The two stood there in silence, just looking at each other for a very long time that day. That was the first time he ever wanted to kiss her. Shikamaru would never forget it, and he would always regret not doing itâ€|

The brunette sat his coffee back onto the table and looked at the ring at the bottom of the mug sadly before he turned the Tv back off. He walked into the bathroom and looked into the mirror before he turned on the shower as hot as he could, getting in. He had to be at work soon. He had to snap out of his funkâ€¦ today was going to be a very long day.

End  
file.